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SUBJECT / SUJET EMBRYO YMCA MUSTERING COMMUNITY RESOURCES

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Using a \$10-a-month basement office as their base of operations, a representative group of Chateauguay residents is nurturing a YMCA action centre.

"We don't need a building with swimming pool and gymnasium," says Constable Tony Cornford of the CNR's police department, a spokesman for the group.

"We are developing our own leaders and hope to take full advantage of facilities already in existence in the community," he explains.

Premises of the embryo association are located beneath the medical building in the Place Chateauguay Shopping Plaza. Furnishings are sparse, consisting of a battered desk, a scarred table, a dozen hand-me-down chairs and an old filing cabinet.

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"This room is mainly for meetings," emphasizes Mr. Cornford, who was recently elected chairman of the developing Y's program committee. "For our fall program, we have already been promised the use of the basement in St. George's church and the Chateauguay police gymnasium."

Mr. Cornford, aged 32 and the father of two pre-school children, notes that the initial main objective of his group is "to work with and for the teenagers of Greater Chateauguay."

This objective was selected by English and French-speaking parents, priests, ministers, school principals, teachers, civic administrators and representatives of various service clubs.

"To determine our most urgent need, we carried out an in-depth reconnaissance of the community and had many discussions with teenagers," recalls Mr. Cornford.

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"We now have over 350 sustaining members and are going ahead, but we are anxious to involve as many representative groups and individuals as possible in the planning process."

Terry Forth, who was recently assigned by the Lachine-Dorval Branch of the Montreal YMCA to work with the Chateauguay group, agrees it may be pioneering a new concept in YMCAs.

"Starting as it is, from within, completely free of institutional goals, this Y should be a true product of the community," observes Mr. Forth, the only professional YMCA staff member associated with this fledgling branch.

He feels that his most important duties now are to help avoid duplication of effort and facilities, and assist in the establishment of contact with existing community organizations.

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He will also help start and operate a Community Leadership Development program and serve as advisor to a newly-established Youth Council.

While the Montreal YMCA will provide whatever professional assistance is required, the development program will provide most of the adult human resources needed.

The Youth Council, made up of 15-18 year old boys and girls will initiate and co-ordinate activities for teenagers.

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